

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 05995 01 OF 03 051720Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
L-03 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 SCA-01 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 EB-08 /074 W
-----051802Z 070099 /43

R 051632Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7177
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 05995

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PDIP, UG, GW, US
SUBJECT: FRG AMBASSADOR ON DESIRABILITY OF REOPENING
U.S. EMBASSY IN UGANDA

REFS: A. STATE 56584; B. BONN 5560

THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAS PASSED US THE FOLLOWING REPORT
(FRG NO. 169) FROM FRG AMBASSADOR ELLERKMANN IN UGANDA.
THIS IS AMBASSADOR ELLERKMANN'S LAST REPORT FROM
KAMPALA; HE IS NOW IN BONN FOR CONSULTATIONS AND REASSIGN-
MENT.

BEGIN TEXT:

1. EMBASSY RECEIVED CABLE NO. 76 DATED 15 MARCH
(STATE 56584) AND WILL ADVISE U.S. CITIZENS AS
REQUESTED. IT WOULD BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE AMERICANS
IN UGANDA AND OF THIS EMBASSY THAT NOTHING IS DISCLOSED
ABOUT THIS MEASURE. THIS EMBASSY WAS SURPRISED TO HEAR
FROM FRENCH EMBASSY THAT THE ENGLISH "TELEGRAPH" ALREADY
BROUGHT NEWS THAT THE GERMAN EMBASSY IN KAMPALA WAS
INSTRUCTED TO PERSUADE AMERICANS TO LEAVE UGANDA AND
THAT THE FRENCH EMBASSY HAD SAME INSTRUCTIONS WITH REGARD
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BONN 05995 01 OF 03 051720Z

TO BRITISH.

2. IN THIS CONNECTION THIS EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO
RAISE AGAIN THE QUESTION OF A POSSIBLE REOPENING OF U.S.
EMBASSY IN KAMPALA. THIS EMBASSY FOR SOME TIME HAS
MAINTAINED THAT U.S. EMBASSY SHOULD BE REOPENED AGAIN
AND THAT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A MISTAKE TO CLOSE MISSION

IN 1972 (SIC).

3. DESPITE RECENT EVENTS IN UGANDA THIS EMBASSY STILL IS OF THE OPINION THAT IT MIGHT BE A BETTER POLICY FOR THE WEST IF COUNTRIES LIKE THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN WERE FULLY REPRESENTED IN UGANDA FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

A) THE UGANDAN PEOPLE ARE COMPLETELY HELPLESS IN THEIR MISERY. THEY DO NOT KNOW HOW TO HELP THEMSELVES AGAINST THE TERROR OF THE REGIME AND THE CONTINUING LAWLESS ACTS BY THE STATE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION. THEY LOOK TO AND HOPE FOR THE WEST TO ASSIST THEM AGAINST OPPRESSION, ESPECIALLY THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN. SINCE RECENT EVENTS WERE FOLLOWED BY EVEN TIGHTER SECURITY CHECKS ON MANY, THIS EMBASSY IS ASKED ALMOST DAILY BY PLAIN PEOPLE AND BY HIGH-RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHEN THE AMERICANS MIGHT COME BACK, EXPRESSING THEIR HOPES THAT THE PRESENCE OF AMERICANS MIGHT HELP TO CHANGE THE SITUATION FOR THE BETTER.

B) THE FATE OF THE UGANDAN PEOPLE IS NOT IMPROVED AND HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT RESTORED TO UGANDANS BY WESTERN COUNTRIES CLOSING THEIR MISSIONS AND ASKING THEIR NATIONALS TO LEAVE UGANDA. ON THE CONTRARY, IT IS THE PRESENCE OF WESTERN DIPLOMATS, TECHNICIANS, DOCTORS, TEACHERS AND MISSIONARIES, WHICH GIVES THE UGANDAN PEOPLE THE ASSURANCE THAT THEY HAVE NOT BEEN FORGOTTEN AND THE COURAGE TO CARRY ON. IT GIVES THEM THE FEELING
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BONN 05995 01 OF 03 051720Z

THAT CRIMES AND INJUSTICES DONE TO THEM ARE SEEN AND REPORTED. I KNOW THAT THE PRESENCE OF THREE WESTERN EMBASSIES DID NOT PREVENT THE KILLING OF ARCHBISHOP LUWUM AND TWO MINISTERS BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT THIS PRESENCE AND THE PRESENCE OF WESTERN JOURNALISTS CAUSED AMIN TO CALM DOWN QUICKLY AND STOP FURTHER PLANS WHICH HE MIGHT HAVE HAD IN MIND. THE MORE WESTERN DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS THERE ARE IN UGANDA, THE SAFER UGANDANS FEEL.

C) ALTHOUGH THIS EMBASSY HAS TRIED TO DO EVERYTHING TO PROTECT THE U.S. COMMUNITY DURING RECENT AMERICAN-UGANDAN CRISIS, IT MIGHT BE MORE EFFECTIVE FOR THE SECURITY OF THE 240 U.S. CITIZENS IN THE COUNTRY IF THEY WERE PROTECTED BY AN EMBASSY OF THEIR OWN. IT WAS NOTICED THAT AMIN TRIED, AS HE DID WITH THE FRENCH EMBASSY WHEN THE BRITISH WERE HARASSED LAST YEAR, TO KEEP THE GERMAN EMBASSY OUT OF THE PICTURE. TO HOPE

SECRET

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SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 05995 02 OF 03 051652Z
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L-03 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 SCA-01 CIAE-00 INR-07
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R 051632Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7178
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S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 03 BONN 05995

THAT THE NUMBER OF AMERICANS CAN BE REDUCED BY PERSUASION
MIGHT PROVE FUTILE. THE REMAINING 240 ARE A HARD CORE
WHICH DECIDED LONG TIME AGO THAT IT WILL STAY IN THE
COUNTRY REGARDLESS OF WHAT WILL COME. THIS IS ESPECIALLY
TRUE FOR THE MISSIONARIES, WHO WILL NOT LEAVE THEIR
AFRICAN PARISHES UNLESS FORCED.

D) IF IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF THE WEST TO HELP
THE TWO CHRISTIAN CHURCHES, TO WHICH 80 PERCENT OF THE
POPULATION BELONGS, AGAINST THE MASSIVE MOSLEM PRESSURE
SUPPORTED BY THE GOVERNMENT, COUNTRIES CARING FOR THE
CHRISTIAN FAITH SHOULD BE REPRESENTED IN KAMPALA IN A
LARGER NUMBER. THEIR PRESENCE MIGHT NOT PREVENT OTHER
PERSECUTIONS BUT THEY WOULD GIVE NEW CONFIDENCE TO THE
CHURCH OF UGANDA AND ASSURANCE TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
WHICH, AT THE MOMENT, FEARS THAT ANY ACTIONS OCCURRING
IN THE FUTURE MIGHT BE DIRECTED AGAINST HER.

E) IF THE WEST HAS ANY POLITICAL OR STRATEGIC
INTERESTS IN UGANDA, THEY SHOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF NOW.
THE DEVELOPMENTS IN ZAIRE AND THE TWO MESSAGES FROM
PRESIDENT MOBUTU TO PRESIDENT AMIN SEEM TO INDICATE THAT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BONN 05995 02 OF 03 051652Z

UGANDA IS NOT SO UNIMPORTANT FOR THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA. THE SOVIETS -- IN A SUCCESSFUL POLICY SO FAR -- HAVE EXPLOITED THE ABSTINENCE OF THE WEST AND TOGETHER WITH EXTREME ARABS HAVE BUILT UP A STRONG POSITION, NOT TO HELP THE UGANDAN PEOPLE BUT TO PURSUE THEIR OWN STRATEGIC CONCEPTS FOR THIS PART OF AFRICA. THEIR AIMS ARE DIRECTED AGAINST KENYA, IN COLLABORATION WITH SOMALIA, AND AGAINST ZAIRE, ANOTHER RELIABLE ALLY OF THE WEST IN THIS PART OF AFRICA.

F) THE SOVIET POSITION SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN WEAKENED, HOWEVER, BY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. ON THE SHABA-ISSUE, AMIN TOOK SIDES WITH MOBUTU AND GAVE HIM FULL POLITICAL AND MORAL SUPPORT. MILITARY ACTIONS BY EXILES SUPPORTED BY FOREIGN POWERS ARE A TRAUMA TO AMIN WHO FEARS HIS OWN EXILES MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE. IN ADDITION, THE VISITS OF PODGORNYY AND CASTRO TO SEVERAL COUNTRIES, SOUTH OF UGANDA, LEAVING UGANDA OUT AND INCLUDING TANZANIA, THE ARCH-ENEMY OF AMIN, IRRITATED AMIN CONSIDERABLY. FROM VERY RELIABLE SOURCES I KNOW THAT AMIN IS GETTING SUSPICIOUS ABOUT SOVIET POLICY IN AFRICA AND EVEN OF SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARDS HIM PERSONALLY. AMIN IS NOT QUITE SURE ANYMORE WHETHER THEY WANT TO SUPPORT OR GET RID OF HIM. THIS IS A DELICATE SITUATION BECAUSE AMIN'S GESTAPO, THE STATE RESEARCH, IS TRAINED AND INFILTRATED BY COMMUNIST COUNTRIES.

G) TALKS WITH COLLEAGUES FROM AFRICAN, MODERATE ARAB AND OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE THIRD WORLD GAVE ME THE IMPRESSION THAT THESE COLLEAGUES AND, I WOULD ASSUME, THEIR GOVERNMENTS, WOULD WELCOME A RETURN OF THE AMERICANS TO UGANDA AS A RELIEF TO THE UGANDAN PEOPLE, A SETBACK FOR SOVIET AGGRESSION IN AFRICA AND A RETURN OF A SOUNDER POLITICAL BALANCE IN THIS COUNTRY. SOME OF THEM ARE EVEN CONVINCED THAT AMIN HAS REACHED THE POINT THAT, IF THE BRITISH AND AMERICANS CAME BACK, HE WOULD
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BONN 05995 02 OF 03 051652Z

TAKE DRASTIC MEASURES AGAINST THE SOVIETS, MOST LIKELY ASKING FOR A WITHDRAWAL OF MILITARY EXPERTS.

H) THE AMBASSADOR OF ZAIRE TOLD ME

SECRET

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SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 05995 03 OF 03 051727Z
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L-03 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 SCA-01 CIAE-00 INR-07
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7179
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S E C R E T SECTION 03 OF 03 BONN 05995

CONFIDENTIALLY THAT PRESIDENT AMIN, WHEN RECEIVING A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MOBUTU THROUGH ZAIRE'S FOREIGN MINISTER, ASKED THE ENVOY TO CONVEY THIS MESSAGE TO MOBUTU: THAT HE SHOULD USE HIS INFLUENCE TO CONVINCE THE AMERICANS AND BRITISH TO REOPEN THEIR MISSIONS IN UGANDA. HE ASSURED THE ENVOY THAT HE WAS NO FRIEND OF THE COMMUNISTS, THAT HE WOULD NEVER BECOME ONE, AND THAT HE WAS INDEPENDENT.

4. THE FOLLOWING ARGUMENTS WOULD SPEAK AGAINST A REOPENING OF AMERICAN EMBASSY IN KAMPALA:

A) AMIN MIGHT REGARD REOPENING AS A VICTORY AND A REWARD FOR HIS "TREATMENT" OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT.

B) PUBLIC OPINION IN THE WEST PROBABLY WOULD NOT SUPPORT AND NOT EVEN UNDERSTAND THE REOPENING OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN KAMPALA. TO ME PERSONALLY IT SEEMS THAT THE WELL-BEING OF 11 MILLION PEOPLE, OF WHICH 80 PERCENT ARE CHRISTIANS, WEIGHS MORE THAN THE EXPECTED CRITICISM OF THE MEDIA.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BONN 05995 03 OF 03 051727Z

C) A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF UGANDANS SHARE THE OPINION THAT ONLY THE COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL WESTERN AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES SUPPORTED BY AN OIL EMBARGO FROM KENYA WOULD BRING THE DOWNFALL OF AMIN. SINCE

THIS CANNOT BE REACHED AND SINCE KENYA MIGHT NOT BE
WILLING TO EXERCISE ANOTHER OIL EMBARGO, THIS ARGUMENT
DOES NOT SEEM TO BE CONVINCING. IN ADDITION IT WOULD
GIVE EXTREME ARABS AND COMMUNISTS EVEN MORE INFLUENCE.
IT WOULD BE HIGHLY APPRECIATED IF THE CONTENTS OF THIS
REPORT WOULD NOT BE MADE KNOWN TO PERSONS OUTSIDE THE
GOVERNMENT. ELLERKMANNEND TEXT.
STOESSEL

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